

KANCHNAR: A TRADITIONAL HERBNandini Shah^{1*} and Neha Shah²¹Medical Officer, State Ayurvedic Hospital, Mundoli, Chamoli, Uttarakhand.²Medical Officer, State Ayurvedic Hospital, Chainpur, Pauri, Uttarakhand.Article Received on
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Uttarakhand.**ABSTRACT**

India is rich in flora with wide range of medicinal plants, *Kanchnar* being one such plant that has been a part of traditional Indian system of medicine through centuries. *Acharyas* have mentioned different species of *Kanchnar* as *Kovidar* and *Karbudar*. Parts like stem, bark, flowers, leaves, seeds, roots are used in the indigenous system of medicine. *Kanchnar* has been described as *Gandmalanashak*, *Grahi*, *Krimighna*, *Kushthaghna*, *Vranropaka*, *Shothahara*, *Raktapittanashaka* etc. This paper represents a detailed survey of literature and highlights the classical description of *Kanchnar* alongwith its medical properties.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Bauhinia variegata*, *Kanchnar*.**INTRODUCTION**

Bauhinia variegata also known as Mountain ebony is widely used plant all over India. The various parts of the plant like flower buds, flowers, stem, stem bark, leaves, seeds and roots are used for curing variety of diseases like diarrhoea, dysentery, goitre, tumour, piles, constipation, leprosy and many more. The phytochemical analysis of ethyl acetate, n-hexane chloroform and methanolic fractions of *Bauhinia variegata* flowers indicated the presence of saponins, tannins, terpenoids, flavonoids, reducing sugars and cardiac glycosides.^[1] Due to these phytochemicals *Bauhinia variegata* possess anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anticarcinogenic, antidiabetic, haemagglutinating, hypolipidemic, haematinic, immunomodulatory, anti-microbial, nephroprotective, antioxidant, anti-tumour and antiulcer activity.^[2] *Acharyas* have mentioned *Bauhinia variegata* as *Kanchnar*, *Kovidar* or *Karbudar*. *Bauhinia variegata* Linn. is described as *Rakta Kanchnar*, *Bauhinia racemosa* Linn. as *Shweta Kanchnar* by Watt.^[3] Various references are found in *Samhitas* and *Nighantu*

regarding *Kanchnar* and its medicinal properties. It is one of the major ingredients in various *Ayurvedic* formulations.

Synonyms

Various synonyms of *Kanchnar* have been mentioned in different *Ayurvedic* texts which indicate their physical characters, properties, actions, therapeutic uses, habitat, specific characteristic etc.

Table 1.1^[4]

<i>Gandari</i>	<i>Kachanak</i>	<i>Devakanchanam</i>	<i>Karbudar</i>
<i>Chamarika</i>	<i>Rakatapushapak</i>	<i>Kumbara</i>	<i>Kachnar</i>
<i>Tamrapuspa</i>	<i>Kanchana</i>	<i>Rakatakanchna</i>	<i>Kantapushapa</i>
<i>Yugamapatraka</i>	<i>Mahayamalapatraka</i>	<i>Uddalaka</i>	<i>Pitapushapa</i>
<i>Swalpakesara</i>	<i>Kachanaraka</i>	<i>Sodapushapaka</i>	<i>Suvarnari</i>
<i>Uddala</i>	<i>Kundala</i>	<i>Yugachanda</i>	<i>Yamalachhanda</i>
<i>Yamalapatrak</i>	<i>Bhadradaru</i>	<i>Kuli</i>	<i>Mahapushapa</i>

Vernacular names

^[5]

English- Mountain ebony

Sanskrit-*Ashmantaka, Asphota, Chamari, Chamarika, Champavidala, Gandari, Girija, Kanakaprabha, Kanchanala, Kanchana, Kanchanara, Kantar, Karaka, Karbudara, Karbudara, Kovidara, Kuddala, Raktapushpa, Shonapushpaka, Suvarnara, Svalpakkesara, Tamrapushpa, Uddalaka, Yamalachada, Yugapatraka, Yugmapatra*

Tamil-*Mandarai, Segappumandarai, Semmandarai, Vellaippuvatti*

Hindi-*Barial, Gurial, Gwiar, Kachnar, Kandan, Kanar, Khairwal, Koliar*

Bengali-*Raktakanchan*

Konkani-*Kanchan*

Malayalam-*Kovidaram, Suvannamandaram, Unna*

Marathi-*Kanchan, Raktakanchan, Thaur*

Telugu-*Bodanta, Devakanjanamu, Kanjanamu, Mandara, Mandari*

Urdu-*Kachnal*

Uriya-*Boroda, Kosonaro, Kanjoni*

Punjabi-*Karalli, Kanchanal, Kularh, Kolar, Koiral, Karalla.*

Telugu-*Devakanjanamu*

Tamil-*Kalavilaichi*

Kannada-*Basavanapad*

Varga or Gana^[6]

Charak samhita - Vamnopaga mahakshaya, Supya shak varga

Sushruta samhita - Nyogradhadi gana, Kashayamadhura shaka varga, Urdhvabhagahara Pushapa varga

Astanga hridaya -Vamanopaga

Astanga sangarha -Vamanopaga

Bhela samhita -Sakavarga, Kashaya varga

Madanpala nighantu -Haritkyadi varga

Raj nighantu -Karaviradi varga

Dhanwantari nighantu -Guduchyadi varga

Bhavaprakash nighantu -Guduchyadi varga

Shaligram nighantu -Guduchyadi varga

Kaiyadeva nighantu -Oushadhi varga

Nigantu adarsha -Kovidara varga, Putikaranjadi varga

Species^[7]

According to *Kaidev Nighantu*, *Nighantu Ratnakar* and *Vanoushadhi Gunadarsh*, *Kanchnar* can be classified according to the colour of flowers-

Rakta Kanchnar

Peeta Kanchnar

Shweta Kanchnar

Rasa panchaka^[8]

Rasa-Kashaya

Guna- Laghu Ruksha

Veerya- Sheeta

Vipaka- Katu

Prabhav- Gandmala nashak

Prayojyang

Twak and *Pushpa* are most commonly used parts however leaves, seeds, flower buds, stem, fruit are also used in various accessions. *Acharyas* have mentioned different parts in their respective *Nighantu* like-

Raj Nighantu- Leaves, root bark, flower

Dhanvantari Nighantu- Stem, bark and flower

Madanpal and *Kaiydev Nighantu*- flower

Twak is used in *Gandamala* (Lymphadenopathy), *Galaganda* (Goitre), *Arbuda* (Tumor), *Krimi*, *Kushtha*, *Kasa*, *Vrana*, *Atisara*, *Apachi* and *Kapha-Pitta dosha* disorders.^[9] Whereas *Pushpa* possess *Pittaghna* (Pacify pitta dosha), *Rakta Pradaraghna* (Treats dysfunctional uterine bleeding), *Kaasghna* (Cough treatment) and *Shwaas rog har* properties.^[10] *Pushpa* of both *Kovidara* and *Karbudara* act as *Grahi* and *Raktapitta shamaka*.^[11]

Karma^[12]

Due to its *Kashaya ras*, *Laghu ruksha guna*, *Sheeta veerya* and *Katu vipaka*, it pacifies *Kapha* and *Pitta dosha*. *Acharyas* have listed numerous other *Karma* (Actions) of *Kanchnar* like-

Dhanvantri nighnatu has considered it as *Sleshmapittahara*, *Sangarhi*, *Deepana*

Rajnighantu -*Kapha vataghana* and *Mutra sangrahaniya*

Madanpal nighntu- *Pittaghana*, *Sangarhi*

Bhavprakash nighntu-*Sleshama pittahara*, *Pittaghana*, *Sangarhi*

Kaiydev nighntu-*Rochana*, *Slashamapittahara*, *Pittaghana*, *Sangarhi*

Nighatu ratanaka- *Agnidipak*, *Sarak*, *Slashamapittahara*, *Pittaghana*, *Sangarhi*

Shaligram nighatu-*Pittaghana*

Shodhal nighatu-*Vatakopak*, *Slashamapittahara*

Acharya Sushrut has mentioned about the properties of *Kovidara pushpa* as they are sweet (*Madhura*) in taste (*Rasa*) and metabolism (*Vipaka*) and can cure bleeding disorders (*Raktapitta shamaka*).^[13]

Medicinal uses

1. The decoction of *Kanchnar twak* is used to treat *Vrana* and skin problems.
2. *Kanchnar* is beneficial in *Malavrodha* (Constipation), *Krimi* (Worms), *Kushtha* (Skin Diseases), *Gudabhransha* (Rectal Prolapse), *Gandmala* (Cervical lymphadenitis), *Raktapradara* (Menorrhagia), *Kshaya* (Tuberculosis), *Kasa* (Cough), *Apachi* (Neck Swelling).
3. *Acharya Charak* has recommended the usage of *Kovidar* alongwith *Kashmari* and *Shalmali* in bleeding disorders.^[14]
4. *Acharya Charak* has advised using *Kovidara* together with other medications in the form of *Khad yusha* to cure bleeding piles.^[15]

5. *Acharya Sushruta* has also proposed using the powder of *Madhuka*, *Shobhanjan*, *Kovidara* and *Priyangu* to cure bleeding diseases (*Raktapitta*).^[16]
6. In the event of a snake bite, *Acharya Sushrut* has advised to take *Shirish*, *Arka* and *Katabhi* with *Kovidara*.^[17]
7. A combination of *Kovidara* root bark powder, butter milk and a healthy diet can be used to treat haemorrhoids effectively.^[18]
8. Consuming one *Pala Kanchnar twak* macerated with rice wash can treat scrofula (*Gandamala*).^[19]
9. *Sharangdhar* recommends taking the bark of *Kanchnar* stem and *Shunthi* on a regular basis to treat *Gandamala* (lymphadenitis).^[20]
10. Soup made from *Kovidara* and *Karbudara* flowers, as well as *Sana*, *Shalmali*, *Dhatki* and *Padma* flowers is prepared with *Dadima* without oil and provided in *Asrigdara*, *Raktapitta*, *Daha* and eye and abdomen ailments.^[21]
11. A decoction prepared with bark of *Bauhinia* alongwith *Swarna makshik bhasma* can be given in case of measles (*Masurika*).^[22]
12. Fresh bark of *Kanchnar* with *Shunthi* pounded with sour gruel can be given in *Gandmala*.^[23]
13. The bark is astringent, tonic and anthelmintic. It is also used to treat ulcers and leprosy. A decoction of the bark is used to treat dysentery. It can be utilized to add tone and vitality to body. It is used to treat tuberculosis and skin diseases. A decoction of flower-buds is given to cure cough, piles, haematuria and menorrhagia.^[24]
14. In excessive salivation and throat diseases gargles made of *Kovidar*, *Khadirphala*, *Dadimpushpa* decoction can be used.^[25]
15. Decoction of *Kanchnar twak* with *Shunthi* powder and honey can cure longterm persisting scrofula (*Gandamala*).^[26]

Formulations

Kanchanara is one of the major ingredients in following formulations-

Guggulu- *Kanchanara Guggulu*, *Triphaladi guggulu*, *Vyoshadi guggulu*

Gutika- *Kanchana gutika*

Aasava/Arishta- *Ushirasava*, *Chandanasava*, *Vidangarishta*, *Kanchanararishta*

Bhasma- *Kanchanaradrava*

Kwatha- *Kanchanaradi kwath*, *Kanchnar Varuna Kwatha*^[27]

Rasayoga- *Gandamala kandan rasa*

Sneha- Ajamodadhya tail, Chandanadya taila, Amrita ghrita, Mahamayura ghrita, Kanchanara Ghana, Gulakand Kanchanara.

CONCLUSION

This paper reveals the detailed description of *Kanchnar* (*Bauhinia variegata*) along with its medicinal uses mentioned in ancient classical texts. We have discussed about the classical references, synonyms, vernacular names, *Jati, Varga, Ras Panchaka, Prayojyang, Karma* and medicinal uses. Various parts like bark, flowers, flower buds, seeds, root, leaves are used and possess properties like *Krimighna, Kushthaghna, Vranropaka, Shothahara, Raktapittanashaka, Gandmalanashak, Grahi, Arshoghna, Rakta pradarghna, Rakta Pittaghna* etc. There is still lack of clinical data for its efficacy, and clinical trials are needed to justify its traditional use. More researches can be done to propose new formulations which are more palatable, more effective with less or no side effects.

Conflicts of interest

None.

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